



NEWS RELEASE

Arizona House of Representatives

Representative Warren Petersen (R-12)

1700 West Washington • Phoenix, Arizona • 85007-2844

Tuesday, March 5, 2019
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

House Republicans Send Letter to Attorney General Regarding Possible Free Speech Violations at Perry High School in Gilbert

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – Yesterday, 27 members of the House Republican Caucus signed a letter asking Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich to investigate possible free speech violations at Perry High School in Gilbert.

Last week, students at Perry High School were reportedly asked by school administrators to remove pro-Trump clothing and signs.

“Given that the free speech of all U.S. citizens is guaranteed in the First Amendment to the United State Constitution, we ask that you, as the state’s chief legal officer, examine the facts of this case to ensure that the rights of these students were not infringed upon,” the Republican House members state in the letter.

Full text of the letter and a list of signatories can be found below:

March 4, 2019

*Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich
2005 North Central Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85004-2926*

Dear General Brnovich:

We write to ask that you investigate possible free speech violations at Perry High School in Gilbert that occurred on Friday, March 1, 2019 during the school’s “Party in the USA” spirit day.

It has been reported that school administrators demanded that several students remove hats, clothing, and signs supportive of President Donald Trump. The students were reportedly asked to leave campus, and one student was suspended for 10 days. While school administrators have said that students were not disciplined for expressing their viewpoints, parents of the students in question say that they were told that the clothing was “offensive, and that the kids were being disrespectful by wearing it.”

Given that the free speech of all U.S. citizens is guaranteed in the First Amendment to the United State Constitution, we ask that you, as the state’s chief legal officer, examine the facts of this case to ensure that the rights of these students were not infringed upon.

The Chandler Unified School District, which includes Perry High School, has stated “its commitment to use its influence as a public educational institution to teach leaders, teachers, staff members and students the value of an inclusive community and give them the tools to be culturally competent in our increasingly diverse society.” Apparently, this commitment includes the hiring of an administrative staff member at the district level to serve as Director of Equity and Inclusion as well as the expense of \$2 million to purchase diversity, equity, and inclusion curriculum for the district. We ask you to ensure that these equity and inclusion programs truly espouse tolerance for all viewpoints, including Christianity and conservatism.

Thank you for looking into this matter and please let us know if we can provide any assistance.

Sincerely,

*Warren Petersen (LD12)
Tim Dunn (LD13)
Kevin Payne (LD21)
Bob Thorpe (LD06)
Frank Carroll (LD22)
Shawwna Bolick (LD20)
Leo Biasiucci (LD05)
Regina Cobb (LD05)
Michelle Udall (LD25)
Walter Blackman (LD06)
Ben Toma (LD22)
Mark Finchem (LD11)
John Kavanagh (LD23)
Anthony Kern (LD20)*

*Becky Nutt (LD14)
Kelly Townsend (LD16)
T.J. Shope (LD08)
Travis Grantham (LD12)
Jay Lawrence (LD23)
Bret Roberts (LD11)
Gail Griffin (LD14)
Joanne Osborne (LD13)
John Fillmore (LD16)
John Allen (LD15)
Tony Rivero (LD21)
David Cook (LD08)
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